FEMA Awards State of Rhode Island Almost $19 Million for COVID Technology Costs

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BOSTON – The Federal Emergency Management Agency will be sending nearly $19 million to the State of Rhode Island to reimburse the state health department for the cost of technology it used to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic.

The $18,927,864 FEMA Public Assistance grant will go to the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) for the cost of contracting for technology and data analytics to fight the pandemic between April 2021 and June 2022.

RIDOH contracts included staffing for case investigation and program management which included nurses, physician, case investigators, epidemiologists, staff for outbreak detection, response, quarantine and isolation support, interpreting and translation services.

The state also contracted with IBM to provide support for case investigation including Command Center Management, COVID-19 Inbound Call Center Assessment & Improvement Plan for COVID-19 Hotline, and COVID-19 Inbound Call Process Definition & Deployment for K-12 School COVID-19 Hotline and case investigation.

A contract with KPMG assisted in capacity building and resources support, including coordinating the planning, development, and delivery of new hire onboarding and training, monitoring CDC and RIDOH guidance, and identifying potential changes to training and professional development processes and procedures.

"FEMA is pleased to be able to assist the State of Rhode Island with these costs," said FEMA Region 1 Regional Administrator Lori Ehrlich. "Providing resources for our partners on the front lines of the pandemic fight is critical to their success, and our success as a nation."

FEMA's Public Assistance program is an essential source of funding for states and communities recovering from a federally declared disaster or emergency.

This grant brings the total awarded by FEMA to the State of Rhode Island to almost $793 million to reimburse the state for pandemic-related expenses.